constructions. In what way can it be said that they are behind other languages? 192 196

[244] Thus for Venus they employ the same verbal image as we and the Latins do, that is lucero ["morning star"--Translator] ijuála-hu, "mother of the day"; similarly they call the wrist "mother of the hand," tcué-huo; the abispa tic-lan [Enigmatic. The closest I can get to any logical meaning is "the tic-lan wasp," which is not helpful at all--Translator] they call "mother of the tic-lan, tic-lán-huu; and the beating of the pulse is "little heart," tdul-lecuáj.

The Mataco language may be lacking in certain particular sounds (articulations) but, on the other hand, it has a superfluity of other particular sounds (articulations). Among these latter the following stand out: quiá, quié, quií, quío, quíu, and cquiá, and so forth, which together with others of similar sound are so frequent as to leave one in some doubt as to whether the language is not made up of the same syllable repeated a thousand times over in the same sense. We know already that quiá, quié etc. can change places with tzá, tzé and so forth, or with chiá, chié, etc., or with tchiá, tchié, etc. Furthermore the inversion of the constituent elements of a word is frequent, for example: "wide" is quü-tzaj-hu and also i-tzaj-quié -- it can therefore be readily understood to what extent Indian oratory can spread itself out and expand, as far as form goes, without really saying anything different. This sort of thing must be very generalized. General Mansilla in his outstanding book Una expedición a los Indios Ranqueles ["An expedition to the Ranquel Indians"--Translator] tells of having experienced this Indian fondness for repetitiveness, and I did also among the Tobas when we were harangued for half an hour and were really only told the same thing in several different ways according to Faustino the interpreter. 195

In their formation of compound words they follow the English and German usage; for example: "gloves," which are handschuhe in German, that is "hand shoes," are cqüéí-pbut among the Indians, that is "hand coverers." The same thing happens in negative sentences; example: "I do not see," is Ich sehe nicht in German and nu-ihenni-tde in Mataco, that is, "I see not," which is also precisely the manner of expression of the inhabitants of the areas surrounding Milan. 192 193

2: Karsten E-5 (1911-1913)1932 SI7 Mataco SI7

765 551 Chaco tribes. These savages as a rule are very reluctant to mention their true Indian names. Thus, as I have mentioned before, when the Chaco Indians visit the whites they nearly always assume names for use instead of their real names. If the Indians are thus careful with the names of the living, those of the dead are particularly regarded as taboo and must never be mentioned, especially by the nearest relatives. When I asked one of my Indian friends about the name of a man who had just died, he hesitated for a moment, looked round, and when he saw that no one of the relatives was near, he *whispered* the name in my ear. This superstition, [774] I believe, is ultimately based on the idea, held by all Indians, that *the soul of a person is inherent in his name*. To know a person's name is therefore the same as to have his soul in one's power, and supernatural influences can be exerted upon him through this invisible part of his personality, just as they can be exerted through a lock of his hair or a piece of his nail. If the soul is believed to be in the name, we can easily understand why the names of the dead are especially taboo. To mention it is the same as to enter into close contact with the departed soul itself, to which the infection of death is attached, and this is supposed to entail unfortunate consequences, at least for the nearest relatives. For an outsider there is evidently not the same personal danger. But since a person may be controlled and conjured through his name, it is further believed that the rest of the dead in the grave may be disturbed by mentioning his name. It is therefore considered a dreadful indiscretion against the relatives to speak of the deceased by name. This is the idea prevailing both among the Tobas and among other Chaco tribes. Generally [795] the Indians do not like to speak about the dead at all, and if they do, their tacit maxim is: *de mortuis nil nisi bene*. The relatives would never admit that they fear a dead parent and regard him as malicious. They always pronounce him to be »good», as if believing that by such a euphemism they may change his character or paralyse the harmful effects arising from him.